

Critical Eye Award



Dear Editor,

I received my courtesy copy of the fall 2005 *Mech* magazine for my contribution (Critical Eye Award, pg. 8), and I thank you. I proudly showed it to my office mates as soon as I received it. They asked me where the picture was that had a bad example of fall protection. I replied, "Right here on the back cover." That was when I noticed that the picture on this issue's rear cover also shows an unsafe practice. The picture shows a Navy doctor suturing a toe. If you look closely, though, you will notice the Sailor assisting on the left is not wearing gloves, though he is close to the wound. Also, no one is wearing a face shield; both are needed to prevent bloodborne pathogen (BBP) exposure. Unfortunately, BBPs exist in the Navy (HIV, hepatitis) and need to be protected against. Please inform your readers that this photo is another example of how not to be safe. It will be the little things like this (details) that will help us achieve our 75-percent mishap-reduction goal by the end of FY08. Again, thank you.

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Thanks again for your input. Closer inspection of the photo shows two of three personnel involved wearing gloves, which should raise the red flag in any work center when some-

one is not properly outfitted for their assigned task—i.e. whistle not in crew's mouth during an aircraft move, cranial not on crew's head while working around suspended loads or up on an aircraft, or any other safety regulations not being followed by personnel in your command.

The federal standard for working with bloodborne pathogens is 29 CFR 1910.1030. It is up to the individual unit to establish its BBP policy and determine what it considers "reasonably anticipated," but why would anyone want to take the risk of exposing themselves to a potentially deadly BBP unnecessarily? Gloves and eye protection are a very small price to pay for protecting yourself from harm. —Ed.

29 CFR 1910.1030(a)

Scope and Application. *This section applies to all occupational exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials...*

1910.1030(b)

Definitions. *For purposes of this section, the following shall apply:*

Blood *means human blood, human-blood components, and products made from human blood.*

Bloodborne Pathogens *means pathogenic microorganisms that are present in human blood and can cause disease in humans. These pathogens include, but are not limited to, hepatitis B virus (HBV) and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).*

1910.1030(d)(3)(ix)

Gloves. *Gloves shall be worn when it can be reasonably anticipated that the employee may have hand contact with blood, other potentially infectious materials, mucous membranes, and non-intact skin; when performing vascular access procedures except as specified in paragraph (d)(3)(ix)(D); and when handling or touching contaminated items or surfaces.*

1910.1030(d)(3)(x)

Masks, Eye Protection, and Face Shields. *Masks in combination with eye-protection devices, such as goggles or glasses with solid side shields, or chin-length face shields, shall be worn whenever splashes, spray, spatter, or droplets of blood or other potentially infectious materials may be generated and eye, nose, or mouth contamination can be reasonably anticipated.* ✈